

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the Office action mailed May 3, 2004. Reexamination and reconsideration in light of the above amendments and following remarks are courteously requested.

Claims 68-77, and 79 are now pending in the application, with Claims 68 and 79 being the independent claim. Claims 68, 77, and 79 have been amended, and Claim 78 has been canceled herein. No new matter is believed to have been added.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 68-71, 73-75, and 79 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,220,249 (Tsukada), and Claims 68, 70, 71, 77, and 78 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,343,116 (Winsor '116). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent Claim 68 relates to a lamp that includes a substrate having a plurality of channels formed therein. Each channel has at least a first end and a second end, and a plurality of adjacent channel segments configured in series with one another. Each of the channel segments has at least a first end and a second end, and is configured to emit light in response to an activation voltage being applied between its first and second ends. A plurality of activation electrodes are coupled to the channel, each of which is adapted to couple to a lamp activation power supply. Independent Claim 68 recites, *inter alia*, that each channel is "configured in parallel with at least one other of the plurality of channels."

Independent Claim 79 relates to a method of starting a lamp configured substantially identical to the one recited in independent Claim 68, and recites, *inter alia*, "applying an activation voltage of a magnitude between the first and second ends of each channel segment in each of the plurality of parallel-configured channels, wherein the magnitude of the activation voltage applied between each channel segment first and second ends is substantially equal."

Tsukada relates to a backlighting lamp particularly for LCDs, and in one embodiment discloses a channel 34 having at least a first end and a second end and including a plurality of adjacent channel segments (34a, 34b) configured in series with one another. However, Applicant submits that nowhere does Tsukada disclose, or even remotely suggest, at least the above noted features of independent Claims 68 or 79. Namely, that the lamp comprises a substrate having a

plurality of channels formed therein that are "configured in parallel with at least one other of the plurality of channels," as recited in independent Claim 68, nor the step of "applying an activation voltage of a magnitude between the first and second ends of each channel segment in each of the plurality of parallel-configured channels, wherein the magnitude of the activation voltage applied between each channel segment first and second ends is substantially equal," as recited in independent Claim 79.

Winsor '116 relates to planar fluorescent lamps having a serpentine path formed in a discharge chamber (12). Winsor '116 discloses that end (e.g., "activation") electrodes (30, 32) are disposed at each end of the serpentine path, and that sidewall electrodes (38a-c, 40a-c) are disposed along two sidewalls (14, 16) of the chamber (12). The Office action alleges that Figure 6 of Winsor '116 discloses n conjoined channels configured along m parallel paths. While not at all agreeing that Winsor '116 discloses, or even remotely suggests this feature, Applicant nonetheless submits that this reference fails to disclose the above-noted features of independent Claims 68 and 79.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 102 rejection.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 72 and 76 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Winsor '116 and U.S. Patent No. 6,218,776 (Cull et al.). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Cull et al. relates to flat fluorescent lamps. However, this citation is not understood to make up for at least the above-noted deficiencies of Winsor '116.

In view of the above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 103 rejection is respectfully solicited.

Conclusion

Based on the above, independent Claims 68 and 79 are patentable over the citations of record. The dependent claims 69-77 are also submitted to be patentable for the reasons given above with respect to the independents, and because each recites features which are patentable in its own right. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully solicited.

The other art of record is also not understood to disclose or suggest the inventive concept of the present invention as defined by the claims.

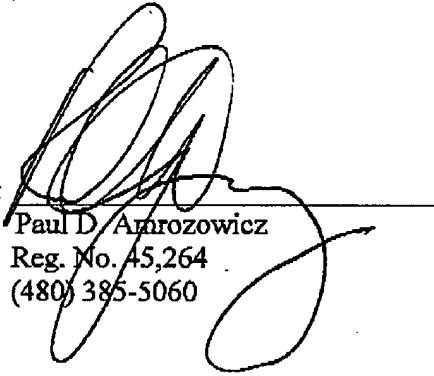
Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

If the Examiner has any comments or suggestions that could place this application in even better form, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the below-listed number.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: August 2, 2004

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